

March 28, 1984

LB 803

SENATOR GOODRICH: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, ordinarily we would just move to advance the bill. But, since some question has come up I want to be sure everyone knows what we are voting on. 803 is the bill that combines the voter registration lists, actually asks the county election commissioner in each county to combine the voter registration list and the auto license people over...those that hold a license to drive a car over 19 years of age, he gets both lists, he or she gets both lists, combines them into one from which they select a jury. The purpose of the bill was to get a broader base in each county from which to select a jury list. The committee as a result of the Bar Association raising some question about the nonmandatory nature of the bill, in other words it was introduced so each county could make their own selection of whether to do it that way or not, the Bar Association group came in and suggested that there was a constitutional question on doing it that way. We got...Senator Beutler got a Attorney General's opinion which in essence said if we do it that way in one county we have got to do it that way in all counties so that the base from which the jury is selected in each county is the same broad base. Consequently, if somebody was being tried for a very serious offense, murder, rape, anything like that, they could not come in and challenge the jury itself by virtue of the inequitable or uneven way in which juries are selected across the state. So, the committee rightfully amended the bill to make it mandatory across the state. Each county had to do it the same way. I have no objection to that. We have already adopted that part of the bill. Now, what does it do, for example, in the event that we proceed with the bill. It does two or three things that are good when it comes right down to it, one of which is it provides a broader base from which to select a jury. It then also eliminates the incentive for people to not register to vote so that they can stay off the jury list. It also provides that when the county election commissioner gets done with this he has an excellent purged voter registration list in each county, and when it comes right down to it, the delayed effective date of the bill, July of 85 is when it goes into effect, gives them plenty of time to go through the process of doing this. The way, for example, of doing it is to get